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ABSTRACT

The establishment of a regional news agency for Latin America to improve the balance of news flow and increase the transmission of news more applicable to regional problems has often been proposed. Despite wide acceptance of the concept, the birth of the Third World's first regional news agency, Agencia Latinoamericana de Informacion (LATIN), has gone virtually unnoticed. This paper documents the history and current operation of LATIN and discusses the political and economic problems that have beset the agency during its formative years. Interviews with LATIN staff and management, other Latin American journalists, and scholars indicate that LATIN is not a failure, as rumored, but rather a small, increasingly viable force in Latin American mass communication. Content analysis of wire service content of newspapers using LATIN supports the thesis that LATIN material is widely used throughout Latin America. Content analysis also reveals that LATIN appears to have changed its original objectives and now challenges the international wire services for a share of the hard news market in Latin America. Although experiencing some resistance from the established wire services, LATIN has been successful in its new competitive role. (Author)

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# LATIN -- Latin American Regional News Agency

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Like other less developed areas of the world, Latin America is seriously disadvantaged by the prevailing imbalance of the world flow of news.[1] Information flows with great ease and in considerable quantity from the few highly developed countries which dominate world politics to less developed countries. The ease and quantity of flow in the reverse direction, from less developed to developed countries, are significantly less. The flow is even more restricted between less developed countries. The international news agencies representing those highly developed countries are the prime agents of the imbalanced news flow.

As a result, millions of Latin Americans have insufficient information not only about their own countries but also about their Latin American neighbors and the rest of the world. Furthermore, the material reported by the international news agencies is often inappropriate to the special economic, political and cultural needs of the region.

Numerous scholars and international organizations have concluded that the establishment of a regional news agency for Latin America would probably improve the balance of news flow and increase the transmission of news that is more applicable to special regional problems. As early as 1926, the First Pan-American Congress of Journalists, a fore-runner of the Inter American Press Association, identified this imbalance in news flow and called for a regional news agency.[2]

The recommendation was repeated frequently at subsequent Latin American journalism conferences including a 1961 UNESCO meeting of experts on the development of the information media in Latin America. The experts proposed regional integration through cross-national agreements and exchanges and the "creation of a cooperative Latin American news agency, operated by information enterprises of the region."[3] However, no decisive action was taken for almost a decade after the UNESCO meeting.

Despite the wide acceptance of the concept, the birth of the Third World's first regional news agency, Agencia Latinoamericana de Información (LATIN), has gone virtually unnoticed. This study is the first detailed analysis of the new press service. Conclusions were based on a review of the very limited literature about regional news agencies, personal interviews with LATIN correspondents and executives, other Latin American journalists, and scholars in Latin American mass communication during 1972 and 1973, and a content analysis of LATIN subscribers.

## DEVELOPMENT OF LATIN

On January 13, 1970, thirteen leading Latin American newspapers formed LATIN to gather and report primarily Latin American affairs from a Latin American perspective. The creation of LATIN as a cooperative news agency, privately owned by daily newspapers of different nations, was without precedent in the world.

Although regionalization of the Latin American mass media is a time-worn, widely-accepted ideal, LATIN is primarily the creation, not of a concerted action, but of one man -- Julio Scherer Garcia. Scherer, a prize-winning journalist, is the director-general of Mexico's most prestigious newspaper, Excélsior, and currently serves as president of the LATIN directorate. He strongly believes that the basic function of the press is "to guide public opinion toward higher human values" -- the mark of elite journalism -- and that the tremendous influence that press has over public opinion commands professional standards that exceed the mere reporting of events.[4]

Armed with the ideal of regional independence of the mass media and the reputation of perhaps the greatest newspaper in Latin America, Scherer traveled throughout South America in 1969 seeking support of influential editors and publishers for a regional news agency. He was able to solicit considerable cross-national support for the venture from many of the largest and most respected newspapers of the region. The founding newspapers were: O Estado and Diário Popular of São Paulo and Jornal do Brasil and O Globo of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; El Mercurio and La Tercera de la Hora of Santiago, Chile; El Tiempo of Bogota, Columbia; El Comercio of Quito, Ecuador; Excélsior of Mexico City; El Comercio and Expreso of Lima, Peru; and El Nacional and La Verdad of Caracas, Venezuela. Although the founders wanted to keep the news agency free of coopting influences from outside interests, they also realized that

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LATIN needed a great deal of outside help in the formative years, particularly in establishing a telecommunications network. As a result, LATIN contracted with Reuters of Great Britain, one of the four largest international news agencies, to provide technical assistance, train the staff, and develop an administrative organization. Operational headquarters were established in Buenos Aires, Argentina, to conform with the transmission system previously established by Reuters, the only major world news agency which has its Latin American headquarters within the region.

Current operation. Today LATIN is a small but growing regional news agency. It is a full 24-hour service distributing over 10,000 words per day excluding a special feature service. In addition to material collected within Latin America and in the United States by its own staff, LATIN distributes news from the Reuters international wire and The New York Times Service. Reuters, in turn, retransmits LATIN dispatches to its worldwide subscribers.

The LATIN cooperative is continually expanding and streamlining its operation. Forthcoming improvements include reorganization and expansion of the telecommunications facilities, concentrating on satellite channels, and distribution of the service to subscribers in the United States and Europe.

LATIN's corps of highly professional correspondents stationed throughout Latin America and in Washington is probably its major asset. Twenty are employed full time and usually

assigned to countries other than their own. Several part-time stringers are also employed. These young but experienced journalists compare favorably with the more highly paid foreign correspondents of the international news agencies and certainly represent the cream of the Latin American crop of journalists.

The average age of the writing and editing staff of LATIN is 33. This is because only young bachelors were hired at the inception of LATIN. The management felt that older married men would not survive the financial hardships of the job. Even today, after increases in pay, LATIN correspondents are paid only 60 to 70 percent of the average salary for AP and UPI correspondents in Latin America.[5] Despite the comparatively meager pay, LATIN has been able to maintain the quality of its staff. For example, Guillermo Piernes, LATIN's young special service editor and former Washington bureau chief, has worked seven-day weeks without a vacation since he joined LATIN three years ago. And he plans to remain with LATIN indefinitely preferring to be "the nose of the rabbit instead of the tail of the tiger."[6]

All LATIN correspondents have solid journalistic experience, usually with the large wire services. All have had university training, although not all in journalism because of what they termed the "low quality" of journalism education in many Latin American countries. Several are lawyers by training.

The new LATIN journalists underwent rigorous training, first at the Reuters office in Buenos Aires, and later in the

field under the direct mentorship of experienced Reuters bureau chiefs. The training program was directed by LATIN's first general manager and dean of British developmental journalists, Patrick Crosse.

Crosse had previously directed the development of several African national news services and more recently was Reuters' deputy general manager in charge of the Latin American operation. At the completion of the training program, Crosse retired and was replaced by Jose Maria Orlando, an Uruguayan newsman and former AP correspondent in Cuba.

PROBLEMS

It is rumored throughout the Latin American journalistic community that LATIN is a failure or, at least, an impending failure. However, close investigation indicates that this is not so. In fact, LATIN has grown explosively since its formation in 1970. With increasing quantity and quality of content, LATIN is presenting a Latin American perspective of the region's affairs to a growing number of readers.

After less than two years of "complete and competitive" service, LATIN has contracts with 114 print, broadcast and institutional subscribers representing many of the elite media of Latin America and the world. For example, La Nación (Buenos Aires), Times of London and the Washington Post regularly use LATIN materials.

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However, the skepticism is not totally unfounded. Both internal and external pressures plagued LATIN during its formative years and fueled the pessimistic rumors. Upon the founding of LATIN, the thirteen participating newspapers agreed to invest a total of $1 million during the first two years, a rather modest sum compared to the budgets of the large international news agencies. According to even the most ardent supporters of LATIN, that was a financially unstable period for the struggling news service.

Piernes, LATIN's special service editor, readily admitted that in the early days of LATIN, he often was uncertain if his next pay check would arrive. But he offered additional perspective:

> (LATIN) was easier to break two years ago, but it is becoming more institutionalized each day. More people know it, and more people buy it. If it didn't go bankrupt with thirteen newspapers, it isn't going to now with 114. . . Now, only a political decision could end LATIN.7

Subtle indications of political in-fighting in the LATIN heirarchy during recent years are also evident. And similar to the economic problems, there are indications these political problems are being resolved.

In light of Latin American history, cooperative management of this enterprise seems highly unlikely. Each of the directors represent a very independent and respected newspaper and must maintain its reputation in his own country. Pushing and pulling by the directors to gain predominance within the organization seems inevitable.

Arturo A. Sánchez Aussenac, the editor-in-chief of Excélsior and, like Scherer, a highly reputed Latin American journalist, said:

> There are different economic, ideological, and political situations (among LATIN's founding newspapers). It is not easy to conjugate all those differences, but the need for original information is greater. This has made the road easier for LATIN. The many differences of opinion are now being harmonized.[8]

The withdrawal from the cooperative in 1972 of two founding newspapers, Jornal do Brasil and El Tiempo (Bogota), and the assumption of the presidency of the LATIN directorate by Julio Scherer Gracia in 1973 are probably effects of this harmonization process.

In addition to internal problems, LATIN is experiencing external political problems. Of most concern is a series of confrontations with the government of Peru. In 1970, the leftist military dictatorship expropriated one of LATIN's founding newspapers Expreso de Lima and accused LATIN of conspiring against the Peruvian government. The volatile situation flared again in 1972 when a LATIN correspondent was ousted by the government for sending a dispatch concerning student strikes that authorities deemed offensive to the national image.

Despite these and other minor incidents in other Latin American countries, LATIN does not appear to be any more threatened by the Latin American governments than the other wire services covering the area. In fact, there are indications that LATIN correspondents are more welcome by

the official sources of some countries than those representing "outside" news agencies. Bolivia is one such country. However, additional research is necessary to verify this impression.

United Press International's manager of the northern division of Latin America, H. Denny Davis, disagrees. He feels that LATIN's confrontation with Peru is indicative of a trend and that a small regional news agency does not have the clout to stop it. "People usually think twice before they pick a fight with an American newsman," he said.[9]

Regardless of the relative freedom of the services, all media suffer constant and serious governmental repression in virtually every quarter of Latin America. Overt methods such as censorship, expropriations of opposition newspapers, and jailing of journalists or more subtle controls such as withholding newsprint or official advertising fill the history of Latin American journalism. And, according to most authoritative sources such as the Inter American Press Association, the situation is growing worse. Despite their reputable positions, virtually all the founding newspapers of LATIN are experiencing some sort of governmental repression. In sum, LATIN can be only as stable as its individual owners.

Indeed, LATIN is immature and is hampered with conceptual and operational problems that can only be expected in an incipient regional news agency. But the problems are now being aggressively combated and, in some cases, resolved. Nonetheless, with or without its shortcomings, LATIN constitutes Latin America's best vehicle for a balanced news flow and integrated mass media.

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## CONTENT ANALYSIS

To test the foregoing conclusions with more empirical research, a content analysis of six newspapers using the LATIN service was conducted. The newspapers were analyzed qualitatively as well as quantitatively to compensate for the imprecision of the measurements used in the content analysis. The coverage of major news stories running during the analyzed time periods was compared by news agency. Together, the two forms of examination reveal some indication of the development of LATIN, its present character, and its relationship to the international news agencies operating in Latin America.

Sample. The sample represents the only relatively complete sets of newspapers subscribing to LATIN available on microfilm or in newsprint at the Library of Congress in Washington. The scarcity of Latin American newspapers in the United States, in itself, is a comment on the news flow between North and South America. The six newspapers analyzed were: El Mercurio (Santiago, Chile); El Comercio (Quito, Ecuador); El Nacional (Caracas, Venezuela); Excélsior (Mexico City); El Diario (La Paz, Bolivia); and La Nación (Buenos Aires, Argentina). Despite the method of sample selection, the newspapers are representative of the types of newspapers subscribing to LATIN with the exceptions noted below.

A total of 287 issues of the newspapers were analyzed in the following four time periods:

1969 - immediately before the formation of LATIN

1970 - immediately after the formation of LATIN

1972 - after start of complete service

1973 - most recent sample

Coding Procedure. All wire service stories that originated in LATIN's geographic area of operation were coded, i.e. all wire service stories with Latin American datelines were judged. Stories from the United States, where (in Washington) LATIN maintains a small bureau primarily to report Latin American news generated in the various governmental organization in New York and Washington, were considered only if they were directly related to Latin America. A slightly modified version of the IPI Flow of the News code book was used to categorize the wire service copy into types of news stories.[10] Length, display and type of news treatment (spot news, analysis, feature, etc.) of each story were also coded.

Controls. Both inter- and intra-coder reliability checks were conducted. The results were well within acceptable tolerances.[11] Since the content analysis did not utilize random sampling or independent observations, additional statistical tests were not considered appropriate. Computer processing facilitated efficient handling of the data.

Shortcomings. The content analysis is merely a record of the numbers and kinds of wire service stories and how they were used. The unit of analysis did not allow for evaluation

of the far more revealing information about the editorial content of the story.

Furthermore, the sample did not represent the Portuguese language media of Latin America. This shortcoming was somewhat compensated by subjective observation of Portuguese language subscribers to LATIN. In my estimation, the addition of a Portuguese language newspaper, such as O Globo of São Paulo, Brazil, would further inflate total figures of LATIN use. Extensive use of LATIN, particularly as a contributory source, was noted in O Globo. The sample also did not represent the few broadcast, institutional or other types of subscribers to LATIN.

Analysis of the original LATIN wire copy rather than the content of the newspaper would have been a better research method, however, the LATIN management was initially suspicious of the research project and refused permission.[12] Nonetheless, the wire service content in newspapers closely reflects the content of the entire wire service run, according to news agency executives. The news agencies carefully monitor subscriber use of the wire copy with a system of playlogs and regularly adjust the service coverage to conform with the newspapers' desires as expressed in their content.

Findings. The findings indicate that LATIN material is being used widely throughout Latin America. (See Table A.) By 1972, LATIN dispatches represented a minimum of 26 percent of the total wire service copy in all the newspapers. One

newspaper, El Diario, used LATIN exclusively during the 1972 time period. While the total number of wire service stories in the six newspapers remained exactly constant, the number of LATIN stories increased about four and one-half times between 1970 and 1972.

In the final (1973) time period, LATIN maintained its share of the market despite the addition of competing news agencies by some of the newspapers in the sample and a corresponding increase in the total number of wire services stories. Excélsior, the backbone of the LATIN cooperative, showed a steady increase in LATIN use. There was a percentage decline in all other newspapers in the sample. However, this is not necessarily indicative of a changing attitude toward LATIN.

For example, El Diario, which exclusively used LATIN in the 1972 time period, added two competing news agencies in the final period. Despite the competition which resulted in the largest percentage decline in LATIN use among all the newspapers, LATIN, still clearly favored by the newspaper, accounted for almost half of all wire services stories in El Diario.[13] Although LATIN use experienced a slight percentage decline in El Mercurio in the last period, the raw number of LATIN stories run in the newspaper actually increased slightly.

The content analysis also revealed an unpredicted trend. A marked change in the type of LATIN coverage during its four

year history indicates that LATIN is developing many characteristics of the large international news service. This congruence is typified by a 43 percent drop in interpretive and feature articles by LATIN. Despite the decrease, LATIN still has a slight edge on the other news agencies operating in Latin America in this type of reporting.

In addition, LATIN's current coverage of soft news is much less than its 1970 coverage. (See Table B.) In this three year time span, LATIN coverage of economic news decreased almost 20 percent. Cultural news decreased 15 percent. During the same years, coverage of economic and cultural news by LATIN's competitors remained relatively constant.

The largest change in LATIN coverage has been the increase in sports news. From only a trace in 1970, sports coverage has rapidly grown and now represents the largest share of total LATIN coverage.[14] This directly correlates with all of LATIN's competitors.

Contrary to LATIN's official statement that it only intended to supplement the large international news agencies, LATIN is apparently changing its objective and now directly competing with the established news services for a share of the hard news market in Latin America. The resulting congruence in content is demonstrated by a comparison of types of news stories covered by LATIN and the other news services operating in Latin America. (See Table C.) There are close similarities between LATIN and its competitors in every area

of news coverage. LATIN's current attention to soft news categories such as culture, economics, and other social information important to developing nations is virtually the same as the other news agencies.

Evidence suggests that LATIN is experiencing considerable success in its new competitive role. For example, the use of the wire copy of Associated Press, the second largest news agency operating in Latin America, decreased 33 percent during the short life of LATIN. Considerable fluctuation in the use of the other competitors was also noted. However, the leveling off in LATIN use in the 1973 time period might be an indication of increasing resistance from the other news agencies as LATIN moves into more direct competition with them.

Other findings. LATIN was used extensively as a contributory source in major front-page stories. Almost 90 percent of all prominently displayed news stories with combination bylines included LATIN as a consulting source. A characteristic use of LATIN in covering a major news event appears at Appendix A.

DISCUSSION

As LATIN grows, it seems to be moving closer to the international news agencies in several respects such as methods of operation and types of news stories covered. Despite the apparent congruence, subjective evaluation indicates that LATIN editorial content is still more relevant to Latin American

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interests.[15] However, the quantitative measurement isn't sufficiently precise to distinguish this. For example, two articles appearing on the arts and entertainment page of El Nacional were coded virtually the same. However, the LATIN article discussed United States ownership of Venezuelan television channels and the resulting cultural imperialism. The other article from an American wire service listed the top 40 pop recordings -- mostly U.S. imports. Some important numercial trends can be observed in the quantitative portion of the content analysis, but the contrast in editorial content between the banalities of pop music and a highly nationalistic issue of cultural imperialism is not reflected. A quantitative analysis of the editorial content of the news services is needed to verify that distinction.

Furthermore, the change in the type of news stories covered might be an indication of LATIN's increasing viability. In 1970, LATIN did not have the resources and experience to cover all the events of major importance to Latin Americans. The changes in LATIN coverage might not be due to a premeditated change in policy, but rather an increasing necessity to report news events of interest to the buying readership in order to increase revenues. Here again additional research is warranted.

In any case, the content analysis data clearly indicate that LATIN is successfully competing with the other wire

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services. Thus the data support the earlier analysis -- based on interviews -- which suggest that LATIN has indeed become a viable organization.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Contrary to persistent rumors in the Latin American journalism community, Agencia Latinoamericana de Información is currently a very viable force in regional mass communications. LATIN has grown rapidly during its four year lifetime and is gaining additional stability as it continues to resolve many of the internal and external problems that beset an incipient news agency.

LATIN's success in due, in no small part, to the professionalism of the young and enthusiastic corps of correspondents. They are the backbone of the news agency, and their performance is the most crucial factor in the news agency's future.

The content analysis indicated substantial use of LATIN materials by the Latin American newspapers. The content analysis also indicated that LATIN is becoming quite similar in news coverage to the large foreign news agencies already operating in Latin America. Perhaps the shift in content has been necessitated by competition with other news agencies for revenues, a competition in which LATIN has had considerable success. Thus, the battle for economic survival has possibly forced LATIN to change its mission from that of a supplemental news agency to one of direct competitor with the other major news agencies.

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However, if through its success in economic competition LATIN becomes too similar to the established news agencies, it will have failed to give Latin America an independent regional voice.

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FOOTNOTES

1. For a general description of the imbalanced world news flow see Chapter Two, "The Flow of Information in the World," in Wilbur Schramm, Mass Media and National Development (Stanford California: Stanford University Press; and Paris: Unesco, 1964).

2. Mary A. Gardner, The Inter American Press Association: Its Fight for Freedom of the Press, 1926-1960 (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1967), pp. 3-13.

3. Meeting of Experts on Development of Information Media in Latin America. Report of the Meeting - Santiago, Chile, 1-13 February 1961 (Paris: Unesco, 1961), p. 10.

4. Julio Scherer Garcia, private interview, Mexico City, March 20, 1973.

5. Pedro Alvarez del Villar, private interview, Mexico City, March 20, 1973.

6. Guillermo Piernes, private interview, Washington, D. C., August 20, 1973.

7. Ibid.

8. Arturo Sánchez Aussenac, private interview, Mexico City, February 2, 1973.

9. H. Denny Davis, private interview, Mexico City, February 8, 1973.

10. The categories used were: armed conflict; politics and domestic government; foreign relations; defense; economics; culture; education, science, and technology; religion; crime; judicial and legal; disasters and accidents; human interest; social problems and measures; and sports.

11. In most cases, coders were in perfect agreement. Eighty-eight percent agreement was the lowest score.

12. As the research progressed, I was able to establish additional credibility, and permission was eventually granted. I intend to take advantage of the concession in the near future.

13. Field interviews confirm this strong pro-LATIN bias by El Diario.

14. There are two major reasons for this concentration on sports coverage in the Latin American media. First, sports

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news is ostensibly the least politically charged category of news and, as such, is the safest news for Latin American editors to publish in an atmosphere of increasing governmental repression of the press. Second, because of the fanatical demand for information on sports events and the ease of coverage, sporting news offers the largest margin of profit for the news agencies. With the worldwide economic squeeze of the mass media, a correlated increase in sports coverage cuts operating costs while still satisfying a large share of readers.

15. This conclusion is supported by field interviews with Latin American journalism educators.

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Sánchez, Arturo Aussenac, editor-in-chief of Excélsior, Mexico City, February 2, 1973.

Scherer, Julio Garcia, president of the LATIN directorate, Mexico City, February 2, 1973 and March 20, 1973.

Zúñiga, Jose, LATIN correspondent, Mexico City, February 2 and 5, 1973.

TABLE A

PERCENTAGE OF WIRE SERVICE ARTICLES FROM LATIN[1]

| | EL MERCURIO | EL COMERCIO | EL NACIONAL | EXCELSIOR | EL DIARIO | LA NACION | MEDIAN |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1970 IMMEDIATELY AFTER FORMATION OF LATIN | 27.3 | 1.4 | 5.0 | 14.8 | 0 | 0 | 3.2 |
| 1972 AFTER START OF COMPLETE SERVICE | 34.4 | 29.4 | 37.9 | 26.0 | 98.2 | 27.0 | 31.9 |
| 1973 MOST RECENT SAMPLE | 31.2 | ___[2] | 24.8[3] | 37.9 | 46.9 | 20.6 | 31.2 |



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1 Includes LATIN, LATIN-Reuters, and combination bylines including LATIN.

2 Data unavailable

3 In this time period, only seven issues of El Nacional in reasonable proximity to the selected dates could be located. The seven issues were coded and the total doubled for comparative purposes here. Statistical considerations plus the composition of those issues of El Nacional observed in the subjective portion of the content analysis dictate that the interpretations be cautious.

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TABLE B

THREE NEWSPAPER[1] COMPARISON OF LATIN[2] STORIES
IN KEY NEWS CATEGORIES

PERCENT OF TOTAL STORIES

| | 1970 | 1973 | CHANGE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Politics and domestic government | 17.9 | 22.4 | +4.5 |
| Foreign relations | 23.2 | 19.3 | -3.9 |
| Economics | 28.6 | 9.0 | -19.6 |
| Culture | 21.4 | 6.3 | -15.1 |
| Sports | 5.4 | 32.3 | +26.9 |
| Other[3] | 3.6 | 10.9 | +7.3 |
| TOTAL | 100.1 | 100.2 | -- |
| N | 56 | 223 | |

1 El Mercurio, El Nacional, Excélsior

2 Includes LATIN, LATIN-Reuters, and combination bylines including LATIN.

3 Includes armed conflict; defense; education; science and technology; religion; crime; judicial and legal; disasters and accidents; human interest; and social problems and measure.

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TABLE C

1973 - THREE NEWSPAPER[1] COMPARISON
OF KEY NEWS CATEGORIES

PERCENT OF TOTAL STORIES

| | LATIN | OTHERS |
|---|---|---|
| Politics and domestic government | 22.4 | 13.5 |
| Foreign relations | 19.3 | 10.3 |
| Economics | 9.0 | 8.8 |
| Culture | 6.3 | 7.4 |
| Sports | 32.3 | 52.3 |
| Other[3] | 10.9 | 7.6 |
| TOTAL | 100.2 | 99.9 |
| N | 223 | 407 |

1 El Mercurio, El Nacional, Excélsior

2 Includes LATIN, LATIN-Reuters, and combination bylines including LATIN.

3 Includes armed conflict; defense; education, science and technology; religion; crime; judicial and legal; disasters and accidents; human interest; and social problems and measure.

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APPENDIX A

(Ver parte inferior)

EXCELSIOR
EL PERIODICO DE LA VIDA NACIONAL
Registrado como Artículo de Segunda Clase en la Administración de Correos, el 15 de marzo de 1917
FUNDADOR: RAFAEL ALDUCIN | DIRECTOR GENERAL: JULIO SCHERER GARCIA | MEXICO, D. F.—MIERCOLES 12 DE SEPTIEMBRE DE 1973 | NUMERO

RECEIVED
SEP 28
HERO RODRIGUEZ TORO

# se Suicidó; se Negó a Dimitir Tras del Cuartela

SALVADOR ALLENDE

## Una Junta Militar Anticomunista Gobier

★ Con el Presidente Murieron Daniel Vergara, Aníbal Palma y el Periodista Augusto Olivares
★ Están Presos Clodomiro Almeyda, Orlando Letelier, José Tohá y Carlos Altamirano
★ Estado de Sitio; Ordenes de Arrestar a la Viuda, la Hermana y Cientos de Militantes Izquier
★ Sólo 250 Carabineros Permanecieron Leales; Inminente Ruptura de Relaciones con Cuba

SANTIAGO DE CHILE, 11 de septiembre (LATIN, AP, AFP y EFE).—Las fuerzas armadas derrocaron hoy al gobierno socialista, luego de librar sangrientos combates en las calles de Santiago. El Presidente Salvador Allende, después de negarse dos veces a dimitir murió —se dijo que se suicidó— junto con varios miembros de su gabinete en el Palacio de la Moneda, que fue bombardeado por los rebeldes.

El cadáver ensangrentado del Presidente Allende —al parecer falleció de un tiro en la cabeza o en la boca—, fue visto por varios bomberos, fotógrafos del diario "El Mercurio" y el jefe de la policía civil de Santiago, René Carrasco, quien insistió en que el mandatario se había suicidado. En el mismo despacho cayeron muertos el subsecretario del Interior, Daniel Vergara; el periodista Augusto Olivares —gran amigo de Allende— que era director del canal nacional de TV y el ex ministro de Educación y Vivienda, Aníbal Palma. Se ignora cómo murieron.

Fueron arrestados el canciller Clodomiro Almeyda y los ministros de Defensa y Agricultura, Orlando Letelier y José Tohá y el senador Carlos Altamirano, presidente del Partido Socialista.

Una junta militar anticomunista tomó el poder e implantó el estado de sitio y el toque de queda que mañana estará en vigor las 24 horas del día.

Los gobernantes militares anunciaron la inminente ruptura de relaciones con Cuba —se dijo que la aviación atacó a un barco mercante cubano cerca de Valparaíso—; garantizaron a los trabajadores que sus derechos serán respetados y emitieron órdenes de arresto y comparecencia contra cientos de militantes de los partidos de izquierda, entre ellos la viuda y una hermana —Laura— del Presidente Allende.

El toque de queda entró en esta noche y en las calles de Santiago sólo transitaban los militares. Miles de civiles fueron que pernoctar en sus centros de trabajo, pues el gobierno se negó a [illegible]

El golpe —que había sido fraguado hace varias semanas por la izquierda chilena— comenzó en el puerto de Valparaíso. El comandante de la zona naval, vicealmirante José Toribio Merino Castro, ocupó la ciudad por tierra, mar y los fusileros navales.

Quince minutos más tarde el Presidente Allende denunció en una radiodifusión nacional que algunos militares "irresponsables" habían declarado su rebelión. El mandatario pidió a la población que conservara la calma y a los obreros que ocuparan sus centros de trabajo.

Los jefes del golpe militar son el general Augusto Pinochet, comandante del ejército; el almirante Mariano Castro, el comandante de la Armada, [illegible] Montero, fue cesado; el general Gustavo Leigh comandante de la Fuerza Aérea, y el general César Mendoza, comandante del Cuerpo de Carabineros.

VIENE EN LA PAGINA 2

## Echeverría Ofrece Asilo a la Familia

Anoche, a las 20.30, el Presidente Echeverría hizo la siguiente declaración en relación con los acontecimientos en Chile:

El gobierno de México lamenta profundamente los hechos que tuvieron lugar hoy en la República de Chile en contra del régimen constitucional del Presidente Salvador Allende.

Fiel a su política de no intervención y de respeto a la libre autodeterminación de los pueblos expresa su solidaridad con el pueblo chileno y su confianza en que éste reencontrará pronto su camino por la vía democrática y pacífica.

Expresa, asimismo, su esperanza de que no se confirme la versión de la muerte del doctor Allende y de que su vida y seguridad personal y las de su familia y colaboradores sean respetadas.

El embajador de México en Chile ha recibido instrucciones de otorgar de inmediato, a la familia Allende, si lo solicita, el asilo diplomático que le será concedido con la ilustre hospitalidad del pueblo mexicano; y el propio asilo, a cualquier persona de nacionalidad chilena cuya petición provenga, poniéndose bajo la protección de la bandera mexicana.

### Lo Lamentaron Diputados de los Cuatro Partidos

## Censuras en la Cámara a los Militares

Por F. CARDENAS CRUZ, reportero de EXCELSIOR

Desde la tribuna de la Cámara, diputados de los cuatro partidos políticos nacionales lamentaron el golpe militar en Chile y —excepto el del PAN— expresaron su solidaridad con el pueblo y el gobierno de esa nación.

Fidel Herrera Beltrán, del PRI; Manuel González Hinojosa, del PAN; Ezequiel Rodríguez Arroyo, del PPS y Héctor Guillermo Valencia Mayorquín, del PARM consideraron, cuando aún se sabía muy poco sobre lo ocurrido, en que independientemente de las tesis tradicionales de México de no intervención y autodeterminación de los pueblos, los sucesos de Chile rompen un orden constitucional establecido.

Herrera Beltrán dijo:

"Lamentamos profundamente que un régimen constitucional se vea amenazado por quienes tratan de negar que el camino democrático es una vía [illegible]

VIENE EN LA PAGINA SIETE

## Fue un Líder de los 16 Años Hasta Ay

★ Antes que el País, Presidió sus Clases Estudiantiles y el Sen
★ Participó Sobresalientemente en el Derrocamiento de Ib
★ Soportó Cárceles, Postergaciones y Tres Derrotas Electo

SANTIAGO DE CHILE, 11 de septiembre. (LATIN) — Salvador Allende Gossens pertenecía a esa clase de hombres que su carácter, su inteligencia, su honestidad y su clara comprensión de la realidad histórica de sus países, es ia llamados a ser líderes conductores naturales de sus pueblos.

Ello implica —y Allende lo sabía— conjugar la teoría con la práctica y correr, conscientemente, los riesgos de quien escoge como oficio el servir, por sobre todo, a su patria y a sus conciudadanos.

Desde joven se dedicó, con abnegada pasión y fe inconmovible, a ampliar la conciencia revolucionaria de las masas para derrotar a las fuerzas de la oligarquía y realizar los cambios profundos que creía necesarios para Chile.

Su constante preocupación por su país no le impidió estar siempre presente en las grandes luchas universales por la paz, liberación de los pueblos oprimidos, la no intervención y la libre determinación.

VIENE EN LA PAGINA 2C

## Empresas de EU Piensan ya en Volver a Chile

### Algunas Dudan, por la Turbulencia

Por MICHAEL C. JENSEN,
de "The New York Times", exclusivo para EXCELSIOR

NUEVA YORK, 11 de septiembre.—Algunas de las grandes empresas de los Estados Unidos cuyas bienes fueron confiscados por el Presidente de Chile, Salvador Allende Gossens, indicaron hoy que podrían reanudar sus operaciones en Chile si un nuevo gobierno otorga la bienvenida norteamericana.

Sin embargo, a muchos de los consultados advirtieron que aún era demasiado temprano para augurar tales posibilidades. Algunos mencionaron que se entrevistan de los acontecimientos en Chile al través de radiodifusoras, que transmiten desde otros países latinoamericanos.

Los inversionistas de las industrias del automóvil, la química y los computadores indicaron que podrían interesarse en invertir en Chile, a que los derechos [illegible]

### Washington no Habló

Por DAVID BINDER,
de "The New York Times",
exclusivo para EXCELSIOR

WASHINGTON, 11 de septiembre. — La revuelta de las Fuerzas armadas de Chile no sorprendió hoy a los funcionarios de Estados Unidos, pero éstos se abstuvieron de hacer comentarios a fin de evitar el menor indicio de intervención o determinación en el derrocamiento del Presidente Salvador Allende Gossens.

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